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MEDICAL INDUSTRY PLANTS WIN PRIZES  
BY LOWERING PRODUCTION TARGETS

In an article called "Vicious Circle," published in Trud on 5 September, Glavmedprom (Main Administration of the Medical Industry) was criticized for planning lowered production indexes for its plants. After consideration of this article, the collegium of the Ministry of Health USSR proposed to the Planning Department and the branch production administrations of Glavmedprom a systematic analysis of the activity of the enterprises and a revision of the plant plans, with a view to fuller utilization of capacities. However, the ministry apparently does not see that its decisions are carried out. The vicious practice of lowering the plans, which has been censured by the party and the government, has not been eliminated.

The Moscow Medical Equipment Plant fulfilled its second-quarter plan by 136 percent. Instead of taking the extremely large reserves of this enterprise into account in planning the third-quarter program, the directors of the main administration planned only for the previous volume of output. It is not surprising that the plan was exceeded by 40 percent.

The Plant imeni 8 March was also assigned its previous plan for the third quarter, although it had easily exceeded it by 3 million rubles.

The main administration stepped up the third-quarter plan of the Alkaloids Plant, but this turned out to be less than the program and the actual level of production attained in the first quarter.

The third-quarter plan for the Kursk Glass Plant, which had fallen behind in the second quarter, was lowered 26 percent, after which it immediately became one of the leading enterprises of the medical industry.

These are the facts. It is clear that the directors of the main administration are engaging in this improper practice of lowering plans in order to achieve ostentatious successes.

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## CLASSIFICATION

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In taking the decision mentioned above, the collegium criticized the formal method of assigning places in the competition among enterprises. It suggested that the main administration, in subsequent evaluations of the economic activity of the plants, should take into account the conditions of work, the load, and the utilization of equipment capacities. The preparation of materials on the totals in the competition was assigned to the finance planning administration of the ministry.

Actually, no changes have taken place. The finance planning administration did not discharge the obligation placed upon it. As before, totals were computed on a narrow basis. Materials submitted by the branch administrations on the third quarter, after going through the main administration apparatus, were discussed at a meeting with the Deputy Minister, chief of the Main Administration of the Medical Industry. Here also, the activity of the enterprise was subjected to careful analysis. It is not surprising that such enterprises as the Alkaloids Plant, the Moscow Medical Equipment Plant, the Plant imeni 8 March, and the Kursk Glass Plant, which operated in the third quarter on a lowered plan, were proposed as candidates for awards. In the competition totals, the first, second, and third prizes were awarded within this group of enterprises.

Generally, when the subject of awarding prizes comes up, the directors of the main administration suddenly become very generous, and, without consideration of any rules, dispose of state resources as they would their own. Plant director Berezovskiy appealed to the branch administration to authorize awards to managing engineering-technical workers for fulfillment of the production plan. He was given the reasonable reply that by decree of the Council of Ministers it was impossible, in the present case, to reward the engineering-technical personnel because the enterprise had not kept up with its assigned variety of types. The director insisted, and the chief of the branch administration transferred the matter to the chief of the main administration, who authorized the payment.

On two occasions, the director of the Kiev Dental Instruments Plant appealed to the branch administration with a similar request. Each time he was refused on the ground that the enterprise had not fulfilled its program in every type of output. However, the deputy chief of Glavmedprom authorized payment of the illegal awards.

The directors of the main administration consider the awarding of prizes a universal means of providing material encouragement, even for achieving an elementary kind of production success. At the Medical Instruments Plant, for example, by order of the former chief engineer of Glavmedprom, a regulation was introduced to award prizes to workers for cutting down the face of injecting cylinders. The amount of the prizes, as set up in the regulation, ranges, according to the different operations, from 25 to 190 percent of the actual production cost of the injecting cylinder. It is not difficult to imagine what the output of this shop costs the state.

The main administration does not give thought to the improvement of labor organization or an increase in labor discipline at the enterprises. Losses in working time at the plants of the main administration, as a result of various standstills, idleness, and absence of workers on authorization of the administration, for a 9-month period of 1950 amounted to more than 53,000 working days. As a result, the country lost 10 million rubles of output. During the same period the same plants worked more than 173,000 days overtime. These are the consequences of thriftlessness and inept management.

To all this must be added the fact that the managerial personnel of the main administration and its planning department do not consider the requirements of medical institutions and the population. For weeks even drug stores in the capital have not had such salable drugs as amidopyrine, papaverine, "psoreazin" /apparently a remedy for psoriasis/, and many others. Consumers hunt for simple preparations from time to time without success. Why, for example, are not menthol,

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obtained from mint, or powdered glucose, which is obtained from starch, regularly available? Dozens of ordinary medicines like these are lacking in every drug store. The responsibility rests entirely with the directors of Glavmedprom.

It is time for the Ministry of Health USSR and the Central Committee of the Trade Union of medical workers to bring the present Bolshevik order into the medical industry, not in words but in deed. -- I. Gerasimov and S. Nikolaev

[The earlier comments made by the same authors in Trud on 5 September were in precisely the same vein. Other plants mentioned therein as operating on lowered production indexes were the Leningrad Dental Materials Plant, the Odessa Medical Equipment Plant, the Stalingrad Mustard Plaster Plant, and the Farmakon Plant.]

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